DCLU

Director's Rule 4-99

Applicant:	Page	Supersedes:
City of Seattle Department of Design, Construction and Land Use	1 of 20	DR 4-95
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Section 1 Introduction

The Washington State Growth Management Act, Revised Code of Washington, Section 36.70A.070, requires counties and cities to include transportation level of service (LOS) standards in their Comprehensive Plans and to enact an ordinance implementing these LOS standards. Seattle's Comprehensive Plan, adopted on July 25, 1994, includes the LOS standards for the City, and City Ordinance #117383, creating a new Land Use Code Chapter 23.52, *Transportation Concurrency Project Review System*, effective on April 3, 1995, was adopted to implement those standards.

This Director's Rule amplifies the Land Use Code regulations in Chapter 23.52 to assist in administration of the ordinance and updates level of service screenline data based on 1997 traffic counts (see Attachment C).

Section 2 Transportation Concurrency and Comprehensive Plan LOS Policies

Transportation concurrency can be defined as either: a) having adequate facilities and services, as measured by LOS standards for arterials and transit routes adopted in the comprehensive plan, available when the impacts of development occur; or b) ensuring that commitments are in place to complete the facilities and services within six years.

Transportation LOS standards indicate the acceptable balance between the demand for use of the arterial and transit systems and the capacity of the transportation system. Total capacity is based not only on the facilities currently in existence, but on known future projects. LOS standards are one method of measuring the impacts of growth and change on the transportation system, and providing predictability for both the public and private sectors regarding current and anticipated operating characteristics of the transportation system.

The proposed transportation concurrency project review system implements Seattle's adopted Comprehensive Plan Policies T21 and T22.

> **Transportation Element Policy T21 - Arterial Level-of-Service:** Define arterial LOS to be the volume-to-capacity ratio (v/c) at designated screenlines, each of which encompasses one or more arterials (Attachment A). Measure p.m. peak hour directional traffic volumes on the arterials crossing each screenline to calculate the screenline LOS. To judge the performance of the arterial system, compare the calculated LOS for each screenline with the LOS standard for that screenline (Attachment B).
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> **Transportation Element Policy T22 - Transit Level-of-Service:** Define transit LOS to be the volume-to-capacity ratio (v/c) at designated screenlines, each of which encompasses one or more arterials, on some of which transit operates (Attachment A). Measure p.m. peak hour directional traffic volumes on the arterials crossing each screenline to calculate the screenline LOS. To judge the performance of the transit system, compare the calculated LOS for each screenline with the LOS standard for that screenline (Attachment B).

A screenline is an imaginary line drawn across several arterials at a particular place. The v/c ratio is the ratio of the sum of p.m. peak hour volumes on arterials crossing a screenline to the sum of the p. m. peak hour capacities of the arterials crossing the screenline.

Section 3 Transportation Concurrency Project Review System

Seattle's Land Use Code Chapter 23.52, *Transportation Concurrency Project Review System*, provides the regulatory authority to conduct transportation concurrency review for all projects that are subject to SEPA environmental review. From the Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 23.52 contains the City's screenline map (Attachment A). and Transportation Concurrency LOS standards (Attachment B) for the screenlines. Before a development project is approved, Transportation Concurrency LOS standards must be met like any other Land Use Code development standard. Chapter 23.52 also includes the basis for project approval, denial or development of remedial strategies to avoid denial.

Transportation concurrency review for a proposed project will be integrated into the Master Use Permit (MUP) review process. Transportation concurrency review will be conducted early in the MUP process. Future renewal or revision of an approved MUP would require a new transportation concurrency project review.

To keep the Transportation Concurrency Project Review System up to date, the City will conduct annual traffic counts along all screenlines. These counts will be taken during the p.m. peak hour, in each direction, along each arterial encompassed by a screenline. The counts will be summed for each screenline in each direction, and this information will be updated and revised annually. These annual traffic counts will be used by applicants and DCLU to conduct transportation concurrency project review (Attachment C: *Level of Service - 1997*).

This annual traffic count will ensure the cumulative transportation impacts of small developments are taken into account, even if they are categorically exempt from SEPA, and therefore exempt from Seattle's Transportation Concurrency Project Review System. Once a small, exempt development project is completed, the traffic it generates will be captured in the City's annual traffic counts. Thus the decision whether adequate transportation facilities exist to support future new development will be based on an accounting of all existing development, including small projects that were not subject to the Transportation Concurrency Project Review System.

Transportation Concurrency Project Review Submittal Requirements: The following information shall be required of an applicant to conduct transportation concurrency project review:

1. Site location;
2. Proposed use and densities, including number of dwelling units, and square footage of non-residential development by type of use; and
3. Trip generation and distribution.

Determine Trip Generation and Distribution for Proposed Project: Applicants proposing projects subject to transportation concurrency project review are required to prepare and submit trip generation and distribution information associated with their respective projects.

Trip generation is based on the proposed uses and densities, including the number of dwelling units and square footage of non-residential uses. In calculating the number of trips generated by a development, the applicant will use the standard trip generation rates provided in the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Manual. A copy of the ITE Manual is available for public use at the Access and Drainage Review Information Counter at DCLU's Permit Information and Application Center. Instead of this approach, however, an applicant may submit a calculation of alternative trip generation rates for the proposed development. DCLU will review and evaluate the alternate calculations and methodology used to determine whether such calculations can be used rather than the ITE Manual standard trip generation rates.

Distribution of a proposed development's trips to the street network will be based on trip distribution tables generated from the City's traffic forecasting model. Following the Trip Distribution Origin and Destination Map are two tables for each of the four categories of land use (Residential, Retail, General Office, and Manufacturing/Industrial). One table shows the distribution of trips by land use type exiting (outbound from) the project site and traveling to other areas in the city and region during the p.m. peak hour; the other table shows the distribution of trips by land use type entering (inbound to) the project site from other areas of the city and region during the p.m. peak hour (Attachment D: *Trip Distribution Origin and Destination Areas Map* and *Trip Distribution Tables by Land Use Type*). The trips between the project site and other areas of the city and region will then be assigned by DCLU to the arterial network using the most likely routes to minimize travel time and distance.

In order to educate applicants on this new Transportation Concurrency Project Review System and improve customer service, DCLU's Access and Drainage Review section has been designated to assist applicants in computing trip generation and distribution for a proposed

project. Please visit the Access and Drainage Review Information Counter at DCLU's Permit Information and Application Center or call 684-5362 for more information.

Determine "Applicable Screenlines": DCLU will determine the proposed project's "applicable screenlines." The "applicable screenlines" used for transportation concurrency review will be those screenlines (up to four) that have the highest number of directional trips assigned to them from the proposed project.

Calculate Volume-to-Capacity (v/c) Ratio for "Applicable Screenlines": A proposed project's trip generation and distribution will provide estimates of the additional number of trips assigned to each "applicable screenline" by the proposed project. These new trips will be added to the volume (based on the last adopted count) for the screenline, and the v/c ratio will be re-calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Volume} + \text{Proposed Project's Trips}}{\text{Capacity}}$$

Once the project's trips are determined, the proposed uses, densities, number of dwelling units and/or square footage associated with the subject proposal cannot be changed without recalculation of trip generation.

Transportation Concurrency Decision:

- If the new v/c ratio is lower than or equal to the LOS standard for the screenline, the proposed project will be approved.

- If the new v/c ratio is greater than the LOS standard for the screenline, the proposed project will either be denied or will be allowed to propose alternative solutions (see next section).

Failure To Meet Transportation Concurrency LOS Standards: When a project fails to meet the transportation concurrency requirement, an applicant may suggest remedial strategies (mitigation & options to receive approval of a project that would otherwise be denied) to achieve transportation concurrency. DCLU will review these remedial strategies and decide whether they are adequate to approve the proposed project.

Section 23.52.006, *Effect of Not Meeting Transportation Concurrency LOS Standards*, reads:

If a proposed use or development does not meet the LOS standards at one or more applicable screenline(s), the proposed use or development may be approved if the Director concludes that an improvement(s) will be completed and/or a strategy(ies) will be implemented that will result in the proposed use or development meeting the LOS standard(s) at all applicable screenline(s) at the time of development, or that a financial commitment is in place to complete the improvement(s) and/or implement the strategy(ies) within six (6) years. Eligible improvements or strategies may be funded by the City, by other government agencies, by the applicant, or by another person or entity.

Section 4.0 Definitions

For the purposes of this Director's Rule, the following terms are defined.

- "**Applicable Screenlines**" are those screenlines (up to 4) affected by a proposed project that DCLU designates are to be reviewed as part of the Transportation Concurrency Project Review System.

- "**P. M. Peak Hour**" is the one-hour period between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. that has the highest traffic volume for a given screenline.

- "**Remedial Strategies**" are possible options or project mitigation that, when put into place, would allow a proposed project to be approved under the Transportation Concurrency Project Review System.

- **"Screenline"** is an imaginary line drawn across several arterials at a particular place where the volume-to-capacity ratio (v/c) is calculated.

- **"Time of Development"** is the date when the building permit is issued for the project.

- "**Transportation Concurrency**" is either: a) having available adequate facilities and services, as measured by LOS standards for arterials and transit routes adopted in the comprehensive plan, when the impacts of development occur, or b) ensuring that commitments are in place to complete the facilities and services within six years.

- "**Trip Distribution**" is the determination of the geographic locations where trips generated by a project originate and terminate. For this Transportation Concurrency Project Review system, distribution is estimated by the City forecasting model.

- "**Trip Generation**" is the estimation of the number of trips that arrive and depart from a proposed project. For the purposes of the Transportation Concurrency Project Review system, estimation of the number of automobile and truck trips, out of the total number of person trips, is required for the trip generation step.

- **"Volume"** is the number of vehicles using a street over a certain period of time. In the case of transportation concurrency review, volume refers to the sum of p.m. peak hour volumes of the arterials crossing the screenline.

- "**Volume-to-Capacity Ratio (v/c)**" is the ratio of the sum of p.m. peak hour volumes on arterials crossing a screenline to the sum of the p.m. peak hour capacities of the arterials crossing the screenline.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

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CONTAINS ONLY PAGES 1-7.
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